

Supreme Court rules Yakama Nation member can face state criminal charge

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Associated Press
March 19, 2015

SEATTLE — The Washington Supreme Court says county law enforcement can charge a member of an Indian tribe living on another tribe's land.

The high court's ruling on Thursday came in the case of a Yakama Nation man who was living on the Quinault Indian Nation's reservation. When Howard John Evans Shale failed to register as a sex offender while living on the Quinault reservation, a Jefferson County prosecutor filed charges against him.

Shale moved to dismiss the charges. He argued the county had no jurisdiction over a tribal member in Indian Country.

But the justices disagreed. They say since Shale was not a member of the Quinault Indian Nation, the state has jurisdiction.